

result of Congress' refusal to provide individuals with health care related tax credits, parents whose employers do not provide health insurance have to struggle to provide health care for their children. Many of these parents work in low-income jobs; oftentimes their only recourse to health care is the local emergency room.

Sometimes parents are forced to delay seeking care for their children until minor health concerns that could have been easily treated become serious problems requiring expensive treatment! If these parents had access to the type of tax credits provided in the Family Health Tax Cut Act they would be better able to provide care for their children and our nation's already overcrowded emergency room facilities would be relieved of the burden of having to provide routine care for people who otherwise cannot afford any other alternative.

According to research on the effects of this bill done by my staff and legislative counsel, the benefit of these tax credits would begin to be felt by joint filers with incomes slightly above 18,000 dollars a year or single income filers with incomes slightly above 15,000 dollars per year. Clearly this bill will be of the most benefit to low-income Americans balancing the demands of taxation with the needs of their children.

Under the Family Health Tax Cut Act, a struggle single mother with an asthmatic child would at last be able to provide for her child's needs; while a working-class family will not have to worry about how they will pay the bills if one of their children requires lengthy hospitalization or some other form of specialized care.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress has a moral responsibility to provide low-income parents struggling to care for a sick child tax relief in order to help them better meet their child's medical expenses. I would ask any of my colleagues who would say that we cannot enact the Family Tax Cut Act because it would cause the government to lose too much revenue, who is more deserving of this money, Congress or the working-class parents of a sick child?

The Family Health Tax Cut Act takes a major step toward helping working Americans meet their health care needs by providing them with generous health care related tax cuts and tax credits. I urge my colleagues to support the pro-family, pro-health care tax cuts contained in the Family Health Tax Cut Act.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO AMEND THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1992

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2000

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, the legislation which I am introducing, which is a companion bill to the one introduced by Senator SARBANES, would provide NOAA with additional resources and authority necessary to ensure its

continued full participation in the Bay's restoration and in meeting with goals and objectives of the recently signed Chesapeake 2000. First, this measure would move administration and oversight of the NOAA Bay Office from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to the Office of the Undersecretary to help facilitate the pooling of all of NOAA's talents and take better advantage of NOAA's multiple capabilities. In addition to NMFS there are four other line offices within NOAA with programs and responsibilities critical to the Bay restoration effort—the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, National Ocean Service, National Weather Service, and National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service. Getting these different line offices to pool their resources and coordinate their activities is a serious challenge when they do not have a direct stake or clear line of responsibility to the Chesapeake Bay Program. Placing the NOAA Bay office within the Under Secretary's Office will help assure the coordination of activities across all line organizations of NOAA.

Second, the legislation authorizes and directs NOAA to undertake a special five-year study, in cooperation with the scientific community of the Chesapeake Bay and appropriate other federal agencies, to develop the knowledge base required for understanding multi-species interactions and developing multi-species management plans. To date, fisheries management in Chesapeake Bay and other waters, has been largely based upon single-species plans that often ignore the critical relationships between water and habitat quality, ecosystem health and the food webs that support the Bay's living resources. There is a growing consensus between scientific leaders and managers alike that we must move beyond the single species approach toward a wider, multi-species and ecosystem perspective. Chesapeake 2000 calls for developing multi-species management plans for targeted species by the year 2005 and implementing the plans by 2007. In order to achieve these goals, NOAA must take a leadership role and support a sustained research and monitoring program. The Chesapeake Bay NOAA multi-species plans can, in fact, provide important information to other fisheries programs throughout the United States.

Third, the legislation authorizes NOAA to carry out a small-scale fishery and habitat restoration grant and technical assistance program to help citizens organizations and local governments in the Chesapeake Bay watershed undertake habitat, fish and shellfish restoration projects. Experience has shown that, with the proper tools and training, citizens' groups and local communities can play a tremendous role in fisheries and habitat protection and restoration efforts. The new Bay Agreement has identified a critical need to not only expand and promote community-based programs but to restore historic levels of oyster production, restore living resource habitat and submerged aquatic vegetation. The NOAA small-grants program, which this bill would authorize, would complement EPA's Chesapeake Bay small watershed program, and make "seed" grants available on a competitive, cost-sharing basis to local governments and non-profit organizations to implement hands-on projects such as improvement of fish passage

ways, creating artificial or natural reefs, restoring wetlands and sea-grass beds, and producing oysters for restoration projects.

Fourth, the legislation would establish an internet-based Coastal Predictions Center for the Chesapeake Bay. Resource managers and scientists alike agree that we must make better use of the various modeling and monitoring systems and new technologies to improve prediction capabilities and response to physical and chemical events within the Bay and tributary rivers. There are substantial amounts of data collected and compiled by Federal, state and local government agencies and academic institutions including information on weather, tides, currents, circulation, climate, land use, coastal environmental quality, aquatic living resources and habitat conditions. Unfortunately, little of this data is coordinated and organized in a manner that is useful to the wide range of potential users. The Coastal Predictions Center would serve as a knowledge bank for assembling monitoring and modeling data from relevant government agencies and academic institutions, interpreting that data, and organizing it into products that are useful to resource managers, scientists and the public.

Finally, the legislation would increase the authorization for the NOAA Bay Program from the current level of \$2.5 million to \$6 million per year to enhance current activities and to carry out these new initiatives. For more than a decade, funding for NOAA's Bay Program has remained static at an annual average of \$1.9 million. If we are to achieve the ultimate, long-term goal of the Bay Program—protecting, restoring and maintaining the health of the living resources of the Bay—additional financial resources must be provided.

The Chesapeake Bay Program, with the important participation of the NOAA Bay Office, has exhibited leadership utilizing the marine sciences to provide guidance for decision makers in the restoration and protection of this unique natural resource. This bill will not only continue that leadership but will significantly advance the knowledge generated from the additional functions called for in the reauthorization. This bill is supported by a number of Bay organizations and members of the scientific community.

HONORING THE LATE BOB
MURDOCH OF TYLER, TX

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2000

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege today to recognize an exceptional individual, Bob Murdoch, of Tyler, TX, who passed away on May 27 of this year at the age of 81. Bob was well-known throughout Smith County and will be remembered for his leadership and tireless dedication to his community.

In 1951 Bob became general manager of the annual East Texas State Fair and held the position of manager from 1953 to 1995. As a tribute to his phenomenal forty-four years of leadership with the Fair, the office building at

the fairgrounds was named the Murdoch Building upon his retirement. At his retirement luncheon, it was said of him that he was a "natural-born leader, dreamer and legend of our time"—a testament to his vision, dedication and commitment to community service.

Bob was a long-time member of the Texas Association of Fairs and Exposition. He served as secretary/treasurer of the Texas Association from 1954 to 1983 and received the Secretary of the Year Award from the national Federation of State and Provincial Association of Fairs.

Bob also was a leader in other community organizations. He served as chief executive director of the East Texas Agriculture Council and as executive secretary/treasurer of the East Texas Farm and Ranch Club, which he organized in 1952. He was the farm editor and broadcaster for radio station KTBB in Tyler from 1951 to 1960 and was a columnist and feature writer for the Tyler Morning Telegraph.

A Dallas native, he was born on December 18, 1918. He received a journalism degree from Hardin Simmons University in 1941 and fulfilled his military duties by serving four years in the Signal Corps and Army Air Corps during World War II. After being discharged, he managed Chambers of Commerce in Bowie and Gainesville.

He is survived by his wife, Jo Ann Murdoch of Tyler; two daughters, Janet Tomlin of Tyler and Dianne Cavazos and her husband, Hector, of Humble; one brother, Russell Murdoch of Dallas; one granddaughter, Melissa, and her husband, Scott Eeds, of Whitehouse; two grandsons, Lance and Evan Cavazos of Humble; and one greatgranddaughter, Emily Eeds, of Whitehouse.

Mr. Speaker, Bob Murdoch's contributions to his community will long be remembered—and he will be missed by his family and many friends in Tyler and Smith County. As we adjourn today, may we do so in celebration of this outstanding citizen from the Fourth District of Texas.

**MIDWEST CLEAN AIR GASOLINE
RESERVE ACT JUNE 29, 2000**

HON. JUDY BIGGERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2000

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I represent a suburban Chicago district and, as we all know, the Chicago area now faces the highest gas prices in the nation. This is not a distinction of which we are proud or happy.

Today, Governor Ryan of Illinois and the Illinois General Assembly took an important step to provide the residents of Illinois with some relief, and they should be commended for their swift action. In one day, the General Assembly passed and the Governor signed a law that suspends the Illinois gas tax for six months. They were forced to take the extraordinary action of sacrificing badly needed road improvement funds in order to give consumers at the pumps an extra ten or twenty cents per gallon relief.

We cannot allow residents of states like Illinois and Wisconsin to confront this situation

again in the future. The burden is just too great on individuals and small businesses in the region.

That's why I rise today to announce the introduction of a bill to help prevent future crises involving the price and supply of gasoline in the Midwest.

The Midwest Clean Air Gasoline Reserve Act would give the Secretary of Energy the authority to establish a Midwest reserve of reformulated gasoline or the petroleum products used to make reformulated gasoline. The President would release this stock of reformulated gasoline in the event of a severe energy supply disruption, a severe price increase, or another emergency affecting the Midwest.

We know now that two factors adversely affected the supply of gasoline in the Midwest, causing prices to rise. In addition to pipeline disruptions, Phase 2 of the Reformulated Gasoline—or RFG—program required the inventory of Phase 1 RFG gasoline to be purged from the supply chain. In this case, supply was interrupted at the same time that inventories were depleted. And in the Midwest in particular, sources of reformulated gasoline are few and far between, and difficult to replace when supply is interrupted. As a result, the price of reformulated gasoline spiked.

With a Midwest, Clean Air Gasoline Reserve in his arsenal, the President may have been able to combat this crisis when it presented itself, at least reducing the initial impact on consumers.

This bill will give any President an important tool with which to respond to energy supply disruptions. I would urge my colleagues to support it.

**H.R. 4680—MEDICARE COVERAGE
AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 28, 2000

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I speak today about the Democratic alternative for providing prescription coverage to all Americans on Medicare. Before I discuss the proposal I would like to tell you that we have seen great success with the Administration's long-term strategy of fiscal discipline. It is working well. Our economy is strong and we should use this moment of prosperity to lengthen the life and modernize Medicare with a prescription drug benefit plan.

Lack of prescription drug coverage among senior citizens and people with disabilities today is similar to the lack of hospital coverage among senior citizens when Medicare was created. Three out of five lack dependable coverage. Only half of beneficiaries have year-round coverage, and one third have no drug coverage at all.

It's projected that this year more than half of Medicare beneficiaries will use prescription drugs costing \$500 or more, and 38 percent will spend more than \$1000. Each year, about 85 percent of Medicare beneficiaries fill at least one prescription. Yet one third of beneficiaries have no coverage for drugs at all. And

in 1996, more than half did not have drug coverage for the entire year. In the district that I represent, there are 64,822 seniors aged 65 or older who face the challenge of paying exorbitant prices for prescription drugs.

For the 10 million Medicare beneficiaries living in rural areas, nearly half have no drug coverage. They have less access to employer based retiree health insurance because of the job structure in rural areas.

There is no reason that we in Congress cannot take the necessary steps to ensure that every older American has access to the lifesaving, life enhancing prescription drugs they need.

My Democratic colleagues and I are united in a single strategy to provide these prescription drugs. I don't know how we can deny the fact that with the funds we have, with the obligations we have, with the fact that anybody who lives to be 65 in America today has a life expectancy of 82 or 83 years that their need for life enhancing and life preserving prescription drugs will only increase. Now is the best time to address this issue. We must do it now. The timing is right.

The Republican leaders put forth a plan with a stated goal of providing affordable prescription drugs for seniors, but the policy falls far short of the promise. Their plan fails to guarantee that all seniors who want it will have access to meaningful, affordable, and reliable prescription drug coverage. Their plan also suggests a private insurance benefit that insurers, themselves, say they will not offer and no one will buy if they did offer it because it would be too expensive. Limiting direct financial assistance for prescription drugs to seniors below the \$12,500 income will leave out over half the seniors.

In contrast to the Republican proposal, we as Democrats have a sound plan for all of America's seniors. It ensures that all seniors get voluntary, affordable and reliable prescription coverage through Medicare.

Specifically under our plan, Medicare would cover half of a beneficiary's drug costs up to \$2,000 a year, beginning in 2002. That would increase to half of \$5,000 by 2009. Over that time, monthly premiums would rise from an estimated \$24 to about \$50. There would be no deductible, and no senior would pay out-of-pocket expenses of more than \$4,000 a year.

The issue of providing affordable prescription drugs for every older American is essential. Adding prescription drug coverage to Medicare is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do. It's about giving people a chance to fight for a happy and productive long life.

**HONORING THE LATE PAUL
KEAHEY, JR.**

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2000

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me today to pay tribute to the late Paul Keahey, Jr., a native of Bonham, TX, and a long-time resident of Marshall, TX. Paul passed away in April of this year, having lived